

The Faction and the Doctor

faction paradox: a primer

by chad knueppe

Originally printed in the Intergalactic Enquirer, the newsletter of the Time Meddlers of Los Angeles. The following is a primer for Faction Paradox and the War, storylines begun in the BBC Books' Doctor Who novels by Lawrence Miles in the novel "Alien Bodies", which came to an end in the novel "The Ancestor Cell" by Stephen Cole and Peter Anghelides. However, the story continued as a spinoff, first in "The Book of the War" edited by Lawrence Miles and then in BBV's "Faction Paradox" audio series and the new Faction Paradox novels and comic books created by Lawrence Miles. In this article, Chad Knueppe summarizes the events of the rise of the Faction, the War and other plots, to get you up to speed for the forthcoming spinoff series." The Faction Paradox is a time traveling fetishist voodoo cult, a criminal syndicate with guerilla tactics, founded to bring chaos and paradox to Time itself.

For untold millenia, the Time Lords oversaw the history of all universal time from their home, the Planet Gallifrey in the constellation of Kasterberous. The Time Lords watched and regulated all of space-time, essentially policing the cosmos for time anomalies and unauthorized use of time travel. Gallifreyan society was made up of the Great Houses, aristocratic bloodlines tied into the roots of the Spiral Politic, that historically saw it as their duty to oversee all of causality.

The Spiral Politic, though difficult to define and describe, was essentially like a map, or list, of all the Time Aware cultures and societies in the universe. Time Lord society became jaded and corrupt, stagnant and voyeuristic. The Time Lords merely observed rather than influenced the universe, but if any society rose to develop the technology to explore and possibly contaminate the time-stream they were immediately put down by the Great Houses of the Time Lords.

The Great Houses of the Time Lords held jurisdiction over the length of linear time, considered themselves superior to all other lesser life-forms, and acted within the realm of age old protocols handed down from the time a Rassilon, the great leader who made Time Travel possible. Rassilon entered a black hole, the Eye of Harmony, created by fugitive Omega's collapse of a supernova. Rassilon captured the Eye of Harmony and stored it under the Time Lord Panopticon, granting the Time Lords an unlimited resource of temporal power. He also created the Rassilon Imprimature, a symbiotic nucleus within the genetic structure of Time Lords to allow them to withstand the perpetual molecular destabilization caused by excessive Time Travel.

It was held that the Great Houses of Gallifrey were responsible for many of the physical laws that governed the universe and the fabric of space-time, these laws were in actuality extensions of the Great Houses. Existing prior to any other great societies, they took it as their right to establish the structural history of the universe. To declare war against the Great Houses would be to declare war upon a color, or gravity, or any other such physical law.

House Paradox arose as an affront to the legacy of the Great Houses. Theirs was a pro-active stance, attempting to mangle and corrupt the timelines, to subvert the powers of the ruling elite. At a time when the Time Lords considered themselves immortal and immutable, House Paradox mockingly celebrated death in a sort of perverse carnival. Their armor was less functional and more emblematic, decorated to venerate skulls, bones and other such emblems of death.

Abandoning the prestige of the Great Houses, House Paradox came to be known as the Faction Paradox, an outlaw group of renegades who caused the ultimate sacrilege by making no excuse for recruiting impure aliens, most of them criminals and madmen, into their ranks. Faction Paradox resorted to subterfuge, to recruiting lesser species and acting in deliberate affronts to the self-obsessed divinity of the Time Lords.

Faction Paradox were fashioned after the grandfather paradox, the time old theory that going back in time to kill your grandfather would, through causality, avert your own existence. But Faction agents wouldn't be erased, they would remain an existing impossibility, living temporal paradoxes made flesh. They likened themselves in the image of a literal Grandfather Paradox, part myth and part real, a being who they considered as great a founding figure as Rassilon himself.

Having created the Faction, the Grandfather was considered a criminal of the highest order, and that his arm was branded by the Time Lords. Grandfather Paradox was thought to have severed his own arm, essentially severing his ties to the Time Lords. Faction society was built on a family outline, new inductees being brothers" or "sisters", most members known as "cousins", and the Grandfather at the top of the ladder." While the Great Houses considered themselves to be immortal and beyond time, Faction Paradox celebrated destruction, and venerated death imagery, dressing up skulls and bones. While the Time Lords observed and prevented any pollution to the timelines, Faction Paradox deliberately went around messing up pure time and caused impossible paradoxes to exist.

The Great Houses relied upon the technological, they practiced pure science, mathematics and studied the universe under the fundamental laws of physics. Their reliance on technology spilt into their entire culture, a tribute to the scientific accomplishments of Rassilon and his like. Faction Paradox revolted, achieving the impossible, glorifying blood and chaos and things that were impossible under the physical laws of the universe. The Grandfather learned how to re-structure and re-format Time against the physical laws established by science and the Great Houses. Faction Paradox venerated ritual above technology, and though their methods were not purely within the realm of magic, strong similarities can be understood between the way human voodoo-cults communicate with "Spirits" and the way Faction ritualists communicate with the body of time itself.

On September the fourteenth, 1752, the English lost eleven days out of their calendar to conform to the calendars of the rest of Europe. Though Britain was, at the time, the most significant nation on the planet Earth, they were still operating under the old Julian calendar which had been out dated by the Papal states who went by the more accurate Gregorian calendar. Recognizing the necessity of a safehouse for the Faction, Grandfather Paradox purchased the lost days from George II under the Gregorian Compact.

Though it seemed a physical impossibility that these days actually went anywhere, the Grandfather recognized that though the Time Lords didn't create time, they had structured it. Thus, Time itself was malleable and could be re-structured under the Faction. The methods of Faction Paradox are based on the principle that a perceived universe was easier to manipulate than any actual universe. Whatever the scientific reality, the fact that members believe the continuum itself to be turning its back on them says a lot about the way they see themselves. The Faction Paradox made their home within the mini-continuum of the Eleven Day Empire. The ritualistic Faction Paradox venerated the loss of their shadows. Being slightly askew from normal time, perhaps a moment out of time, a member's shadow deteriorated with exposure to the rituals and procedures of time-control. In the lore of the Faction, losing your shadow was a concept not unlike the medieval fear of losing your soul. Faction Paradox believed that the universe could forget they exist, making them essentially non-entities living as an affront to the established physical laws of the universe. Like the Celestis, they believed they could erase themselves from the timeline and put themselves into conceptual space.

The Doctor had long considered Faction Paradox a Family Affair, a nightmare myth best forgotten, but had run into them twice in just two regenerations. When he, and his companion Sam Jones, arrived in the East Andes ReVit Zone of the late 21st Century, he found a motley cast of splinter groups, including Faction agents, members of the Celestis, Krotons and the gollum-esque Mr. Quixotl, who may well have been a later reincarnation of his old pal Drax. He He

He also met Homunculate, a future Time Lord, whose companion, Marie, opened up and revealed herself to be a living, sentient Type 103 TARDIS. The Doctor learned of the future War, a galactic struggle in which the Time Lords were fighting an unknown Enemy. Faction Paradox and the Celestis were both heavily involved. The Celestis were the evolved members of Gallifrey's Celestial Intervention Agency. In the future, they realized a time-active conflict would not only destroy the Time Lords but would likely create a new version of the Spiral Politic that would erase them from all existence. Terrified and aware of their own mortality, the CIA removed themselves from the fabric of space-time as a precaution, abandoning the material plane and evolving to exist as pure ideas. The Celestis made their home in Mictlan, a name that means "land of the dead" in South American. It was an asphyxiating hell, a realm made of pure perception, inhabited by non-corporal Celestis who depended on lesser life-forms for occasional physicality.

The Doctor also met the Shift, a once living being made into a conceptual entity under a state of temporal flux. The Shift only existed as a series of memetic connections, only the meaning of the original host existed, but nothing of the material. The Shift communicated by re-arranging letters on documents, or entering into a victim's brain. The Shift met by the Doctor was a former Gabrielidean soldier.

The Doctor discovered that these various groups had gathered to auction the Relic, a sacred object thought to have powerful enough Biodata to finish the War. Biodata was the living essence of a person, not so much their DNA as a list of experiences. Your choices and actions were recorded into your Biodata. The Relic, he discovered, was his own future corpse, regeneration unknown. The Doctor had, at some future time, promised the Celestis his body in return for the non-interference in the Time Lord War on the planet Dronid. They agreed, but sought to modify terms, wanting his living body immediately. The Shift, meanwhile, implanted itself inside his mind, and the Shift, not the Doctor, was imprinted into becoming a Celestis pawn.

Faction Paradox also sought to make the Doctor their agent. Killing his Third incarnation on the planet Dust prior to his historical death after fighting giant spiders, the Doctor's time-stream became a paradox and he was imprinted as Faction.

The Doctor began to discover that his companion, Sam Jones, had been prepared to be the perfect companion to him. Her Biodata had been restructured so that she had two complete sets, Sam and Dark Sam, a drug addicted bad girl who came out while the Doctor, and new companion Fitz Kreiner, were fighting an temporal scar in San Francisco. Sam eventually became the time-adjusted good version, and after many more tragic adventures retired to Earth as the ward of the Doctor's past companion Sarah Jane Smith.

Fitz was the next companion to be affected by Faction Paradox. When the Doctor left Fitz under the care of the United Nations, rogue agents mistrusted him and put him into suspended animation until the 26th Century, when he was revived by Faction Paradox. Fitz, conscripted into their ranks, where he spent most of his time in the Eleven Day Empire, growing strong as their agent with a growing hatred and desire for revenge at the Doctor, who abandoned him. He eventually became Father Kreiner, a top level Faction Agent. Father Kreiner finally met the Third Doctor on Dust, but a force of nature known as "Number Thirteen" caused him to lose an arm and get thrown into the Time Vortex.

Within a bottle universe, Father Kreiner came up against Christine Summerfield, a genetic heir of the Doctor's companion Bernice, and the Doctor's former companion Chris Cwej, now an agent for the Time Lords. Before his death, Father Kreiner begged the Doctor to retroactively pick him up before any of this happened. Not wishing to create paradox, the Doctor refused. The Doctor currently travels with a new Fitz, formally Agent Kode who was reconstructed by the Doctor's TARDIS using the remembered Biodata of the original Fitz.

The Time Lords took Chris Cwej and adjusted his memory so that he had forgotten the Doctor and remembered only an Evil Renegade who got him involved in temporal issues. He had been enhanced by the Rassilon Imprimature, a healing factor with Time Lord DNA, making him more time-active. When the Time Lords messed with his DNA to the extent he became a short, fat, middle-aged man, Cwej became more sulky and less reliable to them. It was decided his Biodata should be used to reproduce him into a new Cwej, though this met with extremity and an entire army of "Cwejen" were constructed.

The Doctor's companion Compassion was instrumental in the events leading up to the War. Laura Tobin was a member of the Remote, a Faction Paradox splinter group regarded as the barbarians of the Spiral Politic. They were the non-Gallifreyan recruits to Faction Paradox, exposed to Faction temporal techniques and technology, delighting in icons and totems of death. The Remote were connected by auditory implants and formed a collective of dangerous agents, feared because they were reckless and would jump sides.

Spending her mortal life on the Remote outpost Anathema, Tobin believed morality and politics were wasteful, that principles and morality were the downfall of society. Remote Agents were constantly replacing their original selves through a memory-sensitive biomass imprinting system. Tobin became Compassion, dubbed so by Fitz as her unique stand on non-morality and dependence on Remote "Signals" actually made her more "connected" to others. In the TARDIS, her malleable Remote DNA began taking in data from the TARDIS, until she became one with it's temporal engineering and trans-dimensional engineering, rebuilding her into a living sentient TARDIS.

When the Doctor's original TARDIS was destroyed, he and Fitz entered Compassion and she was both companion and time-space machine in one. While Marie, the Type 103, was a similar living humanoid TARDIS of the future, Compassion was the first, a Type 102, and Gallifrey's militant President Romana insisted on harnessing and replicating her to create an army of future sentient TARDISes. The Doctor refused to let his companion be enslaved, and the Doctor, Fitz and Compassion became hunted outlaws.

This leads us up to the events of the Faction Paradox finale in The Ancestor Cell.

THE ANCESTOR CELL

Story Summary

The following outline details the events of the novel THE ANCESTOR CELL and was written from my notes to assist me in my review of that novel. This outline originally premiered as an exclusive or the Originally printed in the Vol. 17, No. 10, October 2002 issue of Intergalactic Enquirer, the periodical published monthly by the Time Meddlers of Los Angeles.

It is important to note that while the BBC considers the events of THE ANCESTOR CELL to be canon (as it was by BBC mandate that the Faction Paradox storyline be wrapped up to conclusion), many

hard core fans of Faction Paradox controversially do not acknowledge the events of this novel and consider the Faction's story to be ongoing. Afterall, such is the nature of paradox.

As our story begins, the Doctor and Fitz are aboard Compassion, the Doctor's companion who has become a living Type 102 Tardis in recent adventures. The trio are being chased by War-Tardises as the Timelord President Romana desires to possess Compassion and breed her to generate more living Tardises for a Future war against the Enemy.

The War-Tardises are enormous, mapping internal dimensions upon their external dimensions in a flabby gesture to frighten opponents. Against the will of the Doctor, Compassion begins firing back destroying some War-Tardises. To escape, the Doctor attempts to use the primitive Randomiser and the trio arrive in a cave. Compassion's head explodes and she spews out several interior objects including an incredibly huge wardrobe. Fitz notices there are no shadows in this realm.

The three are separated and the Doctor is propositioned to do the bidding of the Faction Paradox, the cult of Time Travelers who attempt to disrupt the timestreams and recreate time however they see fit. (The Faction comes to the Doctor in a way that mirrors the beginnings of Genesis of the Daleks and he is told this has been his destiny since he was infected on Dust during the events of Interference.) Fitz meanwhile joins up with a group of Faction agents that include a girl named Tarra. The Doctor soon comes into the custody of the Timelords and requests to see the President, Romana, his former companion who has been attempting to possess Compassion.

The Doctor enters the Matrix, which holds the personalities of all deceased Timelords. In the Matrix, Tarra erases the Doctor's original unaffected Biodata Extract. To retrieve it, he must find his Biodata Imprimature in his Type 102 which modeled itself from his original Tardis which was destroyed in Shadows of Avalon. The Doctor finds Compassion, the Type 102, inside the Edifice, a huge structure made of Bone that is hovering above Gallifrey.

Tarra, meanwhile, has stolen the Extract of Greyjen, a former President of Gallifrey who's rule only lasted three years before his death. Upon Romana's Reaffirmation Ceremony to renew her rights as President, the Faction hopes to recreate Greyjen and replace him as the leader. Greyjen was known as the Great Sage of Paradox and they wish to empower him once again, paradoxically brought back from the grave.

A group of Timelords, including the Doctor, attempts to investigate the Edifice. It is made of bone and is shaped like the Gallifreyan Flower of Remembrance, which symbolizes death. (This is seen on the book's cover.) The Edifice begins distorting and extruding through dimensions to touch Gallifrey. The group is pulled inside. Ever since the events on Dust, the timelines across the universe had grown more twisted, malleable and uncertain, causing whole regions of the universe to warp into chaos to such a degree as to make them their own separate universes. The Doctor, who feels at home inside the Edifice where his shadow has been kept, acts as a catalyst for this destruction.

The Doctor manages to escape from the Timelords but one of them, Mali, chases him and he takes her gun. Mali joins the Doctor out of fear and wonders if this is how he attains all his companions. The two work together and discover the Edifice to be a logarithmic spiral held together by bone spikes that seem to create a network of rectilinear elements that curve into infinity. Made simply, this means the Edifice is like a limitless spider web, trapping them within.

Mathara, of Faction Paradox, is concerned to note there is no record whatsoever of the Edifice being a Faction construct and she fears it's origins.

Knowing a Castellan and two of the Science Elite are lost within the Edifice, Romana plans an attack.

The Timelords want to keep it the Doctor's problem, not theirs. Romana argues he can't be trusted with the responsibility as he's not who he was. She attempts to rally support, demanding the Timelords not fall into non-action and indecision from superstitious fear. The future is upon them and the Enemy is near. Chancellor of the Past Fremest asks which future she refers to, Gallifrey's or her own.

The Edifice keeps replicating and growing. The Doctor finds many dead butterflies nailed to a door and it nearly drives him into a seizure. Soon, the Doctor realizes the Edifice is his original Tardis which he'd thought was destroyed. He meets his former self, the Doctor who died on Dust, and realizes this incarnation has been hanging on within the Tardis all along.

The Faction Paradox have a Chaos Ritual wearing skull masks and dancing around a fire. Tarra's mask is removed and her true face is a skull of gristle and blood with blazing eye sockets. Tarra smashes the face of Kaufima, an agent Fitz lusts, and throws her into the fire burning her to death. A one armed Faction agent named Father Kreiner arrives out of the ritual. He recognizes Tarra as an ancient member whom he brought to the Faction a thousand years ago. Father Kreiner meets Fitz and reveals himself as the original Fitz the Doctor left in Geneva.

Giant spiders attack Compassion until she appears dead. Technician Nivet takes control of her seemingly lifeless body to impersonate her. The Doctor believes she accepted Nivet because a technician might save her and believes she is regenerating her identity while out of commission. As the Doctor deals with giant spiders his memories begin to resurface and he realizes he did not die on Dust. The Tardis saved him, retaining his original timeline in which he died fighting the Metebelis Spiders. The Tardis took the Doctor's shadow to warn him. The power this took made the Tardis walls bleed and eventually destroyed the Tardis over Avalon, but still she held on. The Doctor now realizes something Faction Paradox doesn't know. He was never infected as their agent due to the sacrifice made by his Tardis. He knows this will be his salvation. Compassion revives and shows the Doctor what the future war will be and then disappears. She eventually makes her way back to the original Tardis.

The Timelords stole the Klein bottle pocket universe that Father Kreiner was imprisoned in hoping to use it as a stronghold to escape the Enemy during the future war. Father Kreiner mocks Fitz as a second rate copy of himself. He states that the Doctor is molding him to suit his own needs and to ignore the guilt of abandoning the original like he did Susan. The two spar, the current Fitz insisting that Kreiner has lost touch of what being Fitz really means.

The Faction plans to interrupt the Reaffirmation Ceremony and Fitz escapes to warn Romana. She ignores his warning and Greyjen rises up to oppose her, steals her position and places her under house arrest with Fitz. The Doctor is with the Faction. Tarra is revealed as Mother Tarra, having killed the original and her High Council father. Faction agent Kristeva kills pupil Ressadriand in front of the Doctor to demonstrate the consequences of his non-action to save companions like the Fitz left in Geneva. The Faction agent pushes the Doctor to return to save Adric, Katarina and Ressadriand and thus create paradoxes. The Doctor's loss is the Faction's gain.

Romana uses an earring communicator to brief the Doctor on the Greyjen dilemma. The Doctor gives himself up to confront Greyjen who rants madly of the Ancestor Cell which bore all living things at the beginning of Creation. Greyjen fears what he believes are descendant cells, mutated exotic biochemical systems of the Ancestor Cell that were dragged to the prehistoric precipice and thrown over the edge. The temporal paradoxing caused by excessive time travel will cause the descendant cells to reappear, their latency altered and destroy the genetic fabric of all life.

These mutated descendants of the Ancestor Cell are the Enemy the Timelords fear. Greyjen explains

that the Klein bottle was four dimensional, being a time thing, which keeps it locked in three dimensions but the timestream can open it up, leaking it, creating the Enemy. The Doctor realizes his original Tardis became the Edifice to surround the bottle universe and prevent the leakage. The Timelords began this whole chain of events when their time traveling side-stepped millions of years of evolution, creating new paths for chaos to arise.

Fitz and Romana escape and Fitz notices a new statue resembling the Doctor outside the four sided Panopticon which Fitz insists recently had five sides. A great influx of energy is forcing Gallifrey's continuum to collapse into a singularity. Father Kreiner and Mother Tarra capture Romana and Fitz, planning to taint them both to Faction. Greyjen had found the Faction's home, the Eleven Day Empire, on Earth of 1752 and took the knowledge to the grave. He believes the Faction must ascend to rule the Timelords. Compassion says she plans to go on her own way when this is over and that the Doctor can find another Tardis. Romana tells Compassion she damaged all the remaining Tardises alluding pursuit. Compassion disappears and Fitz and Romana make their way to the Council Chamber.

Father Kreiner reveals himself to the Doctor and demands the hypocrite take responsibility for the lives he's ruined. Tarra opposes Kreiner's power.

The Faction infests the Matrix. The Shadow Parliament overlays the Council Chamber. Broken Tardises begin exploding in their berthing cradles. After having a clawlike thorn pierce her, Compassion returns to the Edifice. It has grown so bloated it is puncturing Gallifrey itself. The sky begins to explode. A phantom version of the one armed Faction icon, Grandfather Paradox, arrives and reveals himself to be the version of the Doctor whom Fitz saw as a statue. Grandfather Paradox says he will watch the Doctor turn dark as his Faction virus from Dust takes hold of him. (Parallels the Palpatine and Skywalker dialogues). Fitz and Romana rush in but Doctor is apparently already becoming Faction possessed. Grandfather Paradox disappears. Romana insists she will destroy the Matrix, which is being rebuilt cell by cell, before the Faction takes it over completely. They take Romana's own Tardis, the last that functions, to the Slaughterhouse.

Father Kreiner demands the Doctor remove his arm and put the heads of his past selves up on stakes as the past means nothing. The Faction take the Doctor inside the Edifice and inside Compassion. Father Kreiner sets her controls but shuts her down once he and the Doctor are alone. He appeals to the Doctor as the original Fitz and begs the Doctor return to their meeting and this time not take Fitz with him, saving him from his fate. The Doctor, reluctant to cause more paradoxes, finally agrees. Tarra attacks them both and shoots Father Kreiner in the stomach. She is killed by a giant spider that pins her to a door. Kreiner, on the other side of the door, is impaled by the same spider leg and dies. He begs the Doctor to do something.

The Matrix is taken, history is being rewritten and Gallifrey is dying. The Doctor announces his bluff to Grandfather Paradox. He did not die on Dust but on Metebelis. His Tardis sacrificed herself to save him and his timeline. The Doctor has never been Faction Paradox.

The Doctor eventually finds himself at a choice. If he pulls a lever, he will destroy Faction Paradox and prevent the future war. He will also kill himself, Romana and the Timelords. And he will wipe Gallifrey from existence. Grandfather Paradox knows this means the Doctor has lost.

The Doctor has run out of options and has nowhere to run. In the most assertive actions of his life, the Doctor pulls the lever, mocking Grandfather Paradox that he is using the arm that Grandfather Paradox removed from himself. The Doctor prevents the future war and wipes Faction Paradox from existence.

Compassion saves Fitz and reveals to him a sleeping Doctor who's memory is wiped. She shows him a

small black box that will grow into the Doctor's original Tardis in a century's time. She returns Fitz home and leaves the Doctor to live out the next hundred years on twentieth century Earth as he, and his Tardis, recover. She takes off with Nivet into new adventures.

UPDATES: The Doctor spends over a century on Earth, even raising a daughter named Miranda, before his TARDIS heals and he begins venturing Time and Space again with Fitz and new companion Anji Kapoor. He will meet his greatest anti-thesis, Sabbath, a possible surviving Faction Agent who removes the Doctor's dying Gallifreyan second heart. Sabbath is temporarily tied to the Doctor by his Gallifreyan heart, which he incorporates into his own body, until the Doctor begins regenerating his lost, dead organ on his own. With no more Time Lords to monitor and police time, it's up to the Doctor, Fitz, Anji and Sabbath, to his own agenda, to regulate Time. Currently, they are up against one Temporal Challenge after another. But that's an ongoing tale for another day.

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